Outdoor Education

Since 1973 the Essex Region Conservation Authority has been a leader in outdoor education, ensuring our region's young people have the opportu-nity to experience that which is 'real' in today's technological and virtual world. ERCA collaborates with the community in support of the Ontario Children's Outdoor Charter to advocate healthy and active living in outdoor settings www.childrensoutdoorcharter.ca.

We are keen to assist you with:

- Experiential field visits to our Conservation Areas. Tailored to a variety of learning preferences, unique hands-on activities include: butterfly tagging, bird migration, mapping, solar car experiments, maple sugaring, blacksmithing and many more.
- Schoolyard greening projects.
- Cooperative education and Specialist High School Skills Majors placements.
- Meaningful citizen science volunteer opportunities.
- Winter cross-curricular presentations in your classroom and schoolyard.
- Custom programs tailored to your curriculum and learning outcomes.

All of our Education Programs are inquiry based and promote creativity, character development and critical thinking. Our professional staff are eager to share specialized local knowledge with your students.

Testimonials

"I wanted to thank you for a great day at the homestead yesterday. My daughter absolutely loved it. She talked about her day endlessly. Her teacher and the other parents agreed that it was a wonderful experience. I thought you did a terrific job as well. I learned a lot from you and it is no easy task engaging and maintaining order with 30 grade 1 students. I will definitely get my own class out for some hands on learning at the Homestead."

- Teacher/Parent/Chaperone

"Our students enjoyed an amazing day today at Hillman Marsh. They especially loved dipnetting in the pond and exploring the different wildlife. It's one of the best field trips we've ever experienced. Thank you!"

- Teacher

"Just wanted to let you know that all the teachers consider John R. Park the top of the list.....Very well organized as well as best academic content."

- Windsor Principal

Sponsoring Conservation Education

unionGas

John & Shannon Omstead

We can accomodate most special needs. Please call us to discuss your student's requirements.

Essex Region Conservation Authority

360 Fairview Avenue West, Suite 311, Essex, ON, Canada, N8M 1Y6
P 519-776-5209 | F 519-776-8688
www.erca.org | **www.ourgreenlegacy.org**

Conservation Ontario Natural Champions

100% Recycled Paper

Essex Region Conservation Authority

Outdoor Education Programs

www.erca.org

Hillman Marsh/Kopegaron Woods/Holiday Beach Conservation Areas

Connect your students with nature through our Life and Earth Systems, Structures and Mechanisms and Matter and Energy environmental education programs geared to the curriculum of each elementary grade level. (Note: teachers can combine program elements from other programs) 10:00am to 2:00pm. Maximum 60 participants.

Wildlife and Water Cycles (Gr. JK – 2)
- Marsh, field and pond animal and plant discovery hikes.
- Catch pond creatures and do animal group activities.
- Life cycle activities.
- Water cycle experiments and grid map activities.

Habitats, Plants Food Webs and Soil Erosion (Gr. 3-4)
- Marsh, field and pond habitat and adaptation hikes.
- Catch pond creatures and field insects.
- Investigate plants and pollinators.
- Soil experiment, rocks, food web and erosion map activities.
- Bird migration binocular walk (May).

Energy, Solar Cars, Simple Motors, Biodiversity & Flight (Gr. 5-6)
- Marsh, field and pond biodiversity hike and dip-netting.
- Investigate electric motors using a hand crank electrical generator.
- Experiment with a solar car and simple electric brush motor.
- Renewable and non-renewable energy or biodiversity grid map activity.

Ecosystems and Watersheds (Gr. 7-8)
- Explore the marsh, field & pond ecosystem and watershed.
- Catch and identify pond insects to investigate water quality.
- Watershed ecosystem compass-caching and map challenge.

Please note: Holiday Beach Hawk migration programs fall only.

To Book:
Education Specialist
education@erca.org
519-776-5209 ext. 308

John R. Park Homestead Conservation Area

With a spectacular setting on the shore of Lake Erie, the Homestead offers curriculum based, hands-on programing for all grade levels. Our programs are tailored to fit the Ontario Curriculum for Science, Social Studies, History and Geography for Grades 1 through 8. Combine two ½ day programs for a full day.

Early Settlers (Gr. JK – 8)
- Celebrate our region's early communities and traditions.
- Choose one hands-on participation activity for a half day program, or choose three for a full day program: fireplace cooking, butter making, blacksmithing, woodworking, weaving and 19th century games.

Traditions and Celebrations (Gr. JK–3)
- Fall: press apple cider, bring in the crops, visit the orchard. (A visit to a modern apple orchard can be added.)
- Nov/Dec: make traditional fireplace foods of the First Nations and prepare for winter.
- Spring: work in the garden, beat the rugs and stuff a straw mattress. Hike the nature trail and explore the lake shore.

Early Technologies (Gr. 4)
- Experience how early civilizations used basic technologies to produce food, clothing and shelter.
- Try spinning, weaving, farm chores and wood working.

Great Lakes Shipping & Trade (Gr. 5-6)
- Learn about the canoes, schooners and steamships of the past that laid the foundation of global trade.
- Communicate with semaphore and morse code, try your hand at rigging and more.
- Use the Park's ledgers to analyze sustainability in local communities.

Natural Resources in British North America (Gr. 7)
- Visit the lakeshore in the heart of a Loyalist community.
- Learn about natural resource use in the 19th century.
- Try seasonal farming activities.

Maple: First Taste of Spring (Gr. JK–8, Feb./Mar. only)
- Celebrate the local traditional methods of maple sugaring that began with the First Nations.
- Learn how to make maple syrup while exploring the properties of liquids and states of water.
- 'Cabane à sucre' and francophone culture can be emphasized. The program is available *en francais* on selected dates.

To Book:
John R. Park Homestead
education@erca.org | 519-738-2029

In-Class Programs

1.5 hour hands-on classroom experiments based on grade level and curriculum, available January and February.

Grade 2-3
Guided experiments about water, soil, and plants.

Grade 4
Rotate through expiriments on the rock cycle and soil erosion.

Grade 6-7
Rotate through experiment stations on biodiversity and ecosystems.

Grade 8
Rotate through experiment stations on drinking water systems.

Fees for All Programs:
- Half Day & In Class Programs (1-2hrs) $150 per group
- Full Day (4 hours with lunch break) $250 per group
- Up to 30 children per group
- 2-3 groups can be accommodated per day. Save by filling a bus!
- One free adult supervisory for every five students.
- Payment must be made on the day of your trip by cheque, Credit, or cash (payable to Essex Region Conservation Authority)
- Debit also available at the John R. Park Homestead only.
- Our education programs are exempt from HST.